

## ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

**author's perspective:** a writer's position on a topic; the combination of ideas, values, feelings, and beliefs that influence the way a writer looks at a topic

**tone:** the attitude a writer takes to the subject, as shown by word choice

## HERE'S HOW

**Step 1: Identify the main idea.** Ask yourself: What is the author's most important message about the topic? That is the author's main idea.

**Step 2: Look for clues to the author's perspective.** Ask yourself:

- Does the author make direct statements about his or her position?
- Which people or characters does the author seem to admire or dislike? Which might be expressing the author's own views?
- How do the author's words express a positive or negative view?
- What tone, or attitude, does the author convey? In a persuasive essay, negative words may convey an angry tone about something the author thinks is unfair. In a biography, flattering words may describe a famous person in an admiring tone.

**Step 3: Examine different clues in nonfiction or in fiction.**

- In nonfiction, examine such things as intended audience, selection of facts and their relative importance, and emphasis on words or ideas.
- In fiction, look at literary elements such as setting, plot, and theme. Look at the cultural context of the characters—such as their home, work, and historical era.

Text Clues to Author's Perspective	
In Nonfiction	In Fiction
direct statements	theme
portrayal of important individuals	portrayal of characters
cultural context	setting or cultural context
word choice and tone	word choice and tone

**Step 4: Consider the author's life.** An author's personal background, such as historical era, family, and work, may affect his or her perspective.

**Step 5: Describe the author's perspective.** Based on evidence in the text, or other reliable sources, summarize how the author feels about his or her topic. Be specific, but don't make assumptions that you can't support.